

FORT LANCASTER

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

Sheffield, Texas

Pre-Visit Guide

Grade 4

Overview: Westward Ho to Fort Lancaster

In this lesson, students will learn about Fort Lancaster's construction, the changing landscape of settlement in Texas in the mid-1800s, and the fort's important function as a refuge for settlers heading west.

Social Studies TEKS

(6) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:

(A) apply geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to construct and interpret maps.

(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to:

(A) identify and explain clusters and patterns of settlement in Texas at different time periods such as prior to the Texas Revolution, after the building of the railroads, and following World War II.

(12) Economics. The student understands patterns of work and economic activities in Texas. The student is expected to:

(C) analyze the effects of exploration, immigration, migration, and limited resources on the economic development and growth of Texas.

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States and Texas;

(C) organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps.

Materials

- Historical images for display/distribution
- Activity resources
- Graphic organizer
- Fort Lancaster State Historic Site introductory video (<https://youtu.be/abheEKzNG9w>)

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Vocabulary

- **migration:** the act of moving from one place to another
- **nomadic:** having no permanent home; characterized by moving from place to place

Historical Context

Fort Lancaster, a U.S. Army fort in west Texas, was established in 1855. Soldiers stationed at the fort were responsible for providing safe escort to travelers, mail carriers, and wagon trains heading west toward California.

The troops who lived and worked at Fort Lancaster were responsible for building and maintaining all the buildings, including a bakery, forge, carpentry shop, laundry, kitchen, hospital, and provisions store. Services and goods were provided to both troops and travelers at this remote and self-sufficient outpost.

After the U.S.-Mexican War ended, people from across the U.S. headed west to California, Colorado, and beyond to explore, mine for gold, and claim land. This settler migration disrupted Native American hunting grounds and impacted their nomadic ways of life. By 1857, Native American tribes had been decimated by disease or combat, moved to reservation territories, or pushed onto the western frontier. At that time, Texas was split into “settled lands” and “Indian territory.” A line of frontier forts ran north to south throughout the state as a line of defense for travelers and settlers.

Activity: Out West at Fort Lancaster

15 minutes

Display/distribute the **Fort Lancaster, Texas, 1861 image**. Tell students this is a wood engraving, believed to show the fort as it looked in 1861. Give students five minutes to study the image.

As a class, discuss the following:

- What details do you notice in the image that tell you what life was like for travelers and soldiers at this fort in 1861?
- Why would travelers in west Texas need protection as they headed through this land?
- What would have been challenging about living at this fort in 1861?
- What would have been enjoyable and interesting about living there?
- What questions do you have about life at the fort in the late 1800s after studying this image?

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Activity: Mapping the Fort

20 minutes

Display/distribute the **1700s map of Texas**, **1857 Texas Forts map**, and the **activity worksheet**. Have students work individually or in pairs to complete the activity. Share responses.

Answer Key:

1. Apache
2. Comanche
3. Caddo Tribes
4. Frontier Line
5. Indian Territory
6. eight
7. three
8. Lower Road
9. Lipan Apache, Apache, Mescalero
10. Kiowa, Kiowa Apache

Activity: History Worth Preserving

20 minutes

Distribute the **activity worksheet**. Tell students to complete the organizer as they watch the Fort Lancaster State Historic Site **introductory video**. Share responses.

Answer Key:

1. Gold Rush
2. protect travelers from Native American attacks
3. stagecoach, wagon trains
4. to defend their territory
5. Germany, Ireland
6. as a form of punishment
7. Buffalo Soldiers
8. to save the history of one of the most isolated forts on the western frontier
9. Answers will vary.
10. Answers will vary.

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Activity: Mapping Camp Lancaster

20 minutes

Distribute the **activity worksheet**. Tell students that in this activity, they will complete a map of the layout of Camp Lancaster in 1856 by listening to your directions.

Preview the worksheet map. Help students with any cursive labels. Also review the worksheet labels they will be writing on the map as well as the compass rose.

Read the following directions aloud:

- Find the corral. Draw a square directly south of it. Label the new building “**sutler**.” A sutler was a non-military person who operated this store where soldiers could buy goods and supplies.
- Find the two laundress buildings that are south of the corral. Draw a square between the laundress buildings. Label the new building “**bakery**.”
- Find the two laundress buildings that are north of the corral. Draw a square between the laundress buildings. Label the new building “**carpenter**.”
- Find the building with no label that is located to the north of the carpenter building. Label it “**blacksmith**.”
- Find the building located farthest south on the map. Label it “**hospital**.”
- Find the four sets of officer’s quarters on the east side of the map. Draw an X to the west of the middle two buildings. Label the X “**flag**.”

After the activity, display/distribute the actual **1856 Camp Lancaster map**. Have students compare the accuracy of their drawings to the primary source map. Ask what challenges students had in completing the activity.

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Assessment

Evaluate student media organizers and map for completeness and understanding.

Take-home Extension

Distribute **Fort Lancaster KWL charts**. Tell students to complete the K and W columns of the chart and bring it back to class. They will complete the chart as a Post-Visit activity.

Additional Resources & Extensions

The Portal to Texas History

<https://texashistory.unt.edu>

The Handbook of Texas Online

<https://tshaonline.org/handbook>

Library of Congress

<https://loc.gov>

Texas State Library and Archives Commission's "Native American Relations in Texas"

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/exhibits/indian/intro/page2.html>

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Fort Lancaster KWL Chart

KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED

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Activity Image: Fort Lancaster, 1861

An image believed to represent Fort Lancaster. *Fort Lancaster, Texas*, 1861. Wood engraving printed in *Harper's Weekly*. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003677260/>. (Accessed October 21, 2017.) Caption: From a Sketch by a Government Draughtsman



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Activity Image: Map of Texas, ca. 1700s

Bolton, Herbert E. *Map of Texas and Adjacent Regions in the Eighteenth Century*, 1915. Map. University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, Hardin-Simmons University Library, texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph492871/m1/1/?q=apache. (Accessed November 18, 2017.)



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Courtesy of Fort Lancaster State Historic Site



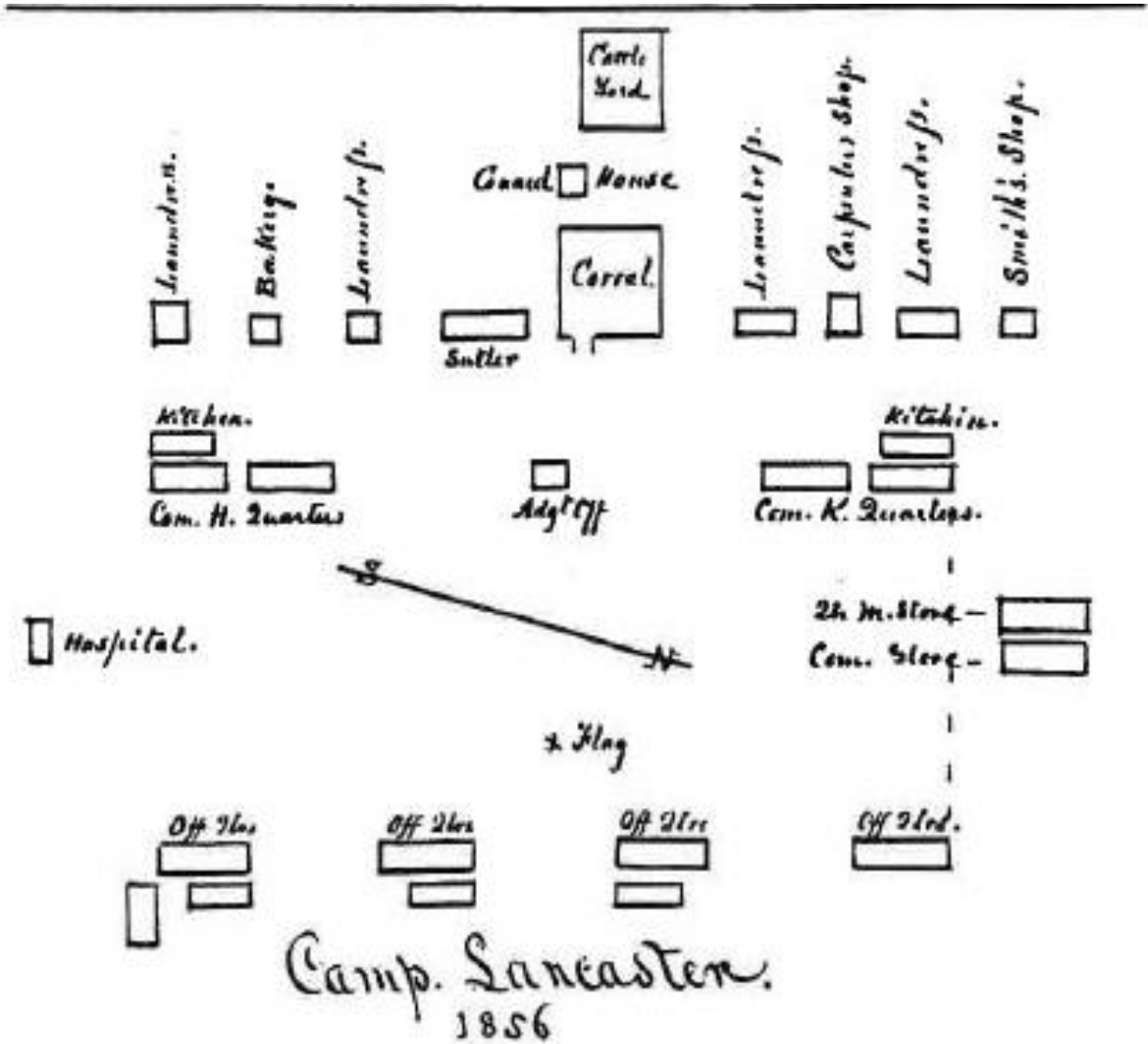
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Activity Image: Camp Lancaster Map, 1856

Courtesy of Fort Lancaster State Historic Site



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Activity: Mapping the Fort

Study the two maps and write answers below to complete the activity.

Map of Texas, ca. 1700s

1. What Native American group is shown living in a large area of west Texas?
2. What group is shown living in the most northern area of Texas?
3. What tribe group is shown living in the most eastern area of Texas?

Texas Forts Map, 1857

4. What is the line called that divides the settled and other areas of Texas?
5. What is the land to the west of the dividing line called?
6. In 1857, how many forts (marked by red squares) were located directly on the frontier line?
7. How many forts were located in Indian Territory?
8. Which road would travelers take from the settled lands to get to Fort Lancaster?
9. What Native American groups were located directly around Fort Lancaster?

Compare Both Maps

10. According to the maps, which Native American tribes are shown living in northern Texas in 1857 but not in the 1700s?

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Activity: History Worth Preserving

Write answers to these questions as you watch the Fort Lancaster Historic Site introductory video.

1. Why were people traveling west through Texas to get to California in the 1840s?
2. Why did the U.S. Army establish forts along the western route?
3. What kinds of vehicles did people use to travel west?
4. Why did Native American tribes along the western route attack travelers?
5. The soldiers stationed at Fort Lancaster came mostly from what two countries?
6. Why did soldiers wear a “barrel coat”?
7. After the Civil War, what group of soldiers reoccupied Fort Lancaster?
8. Why was Fort Lancaster preserved?

List **two other facts** you learned from this video:

9.

10.

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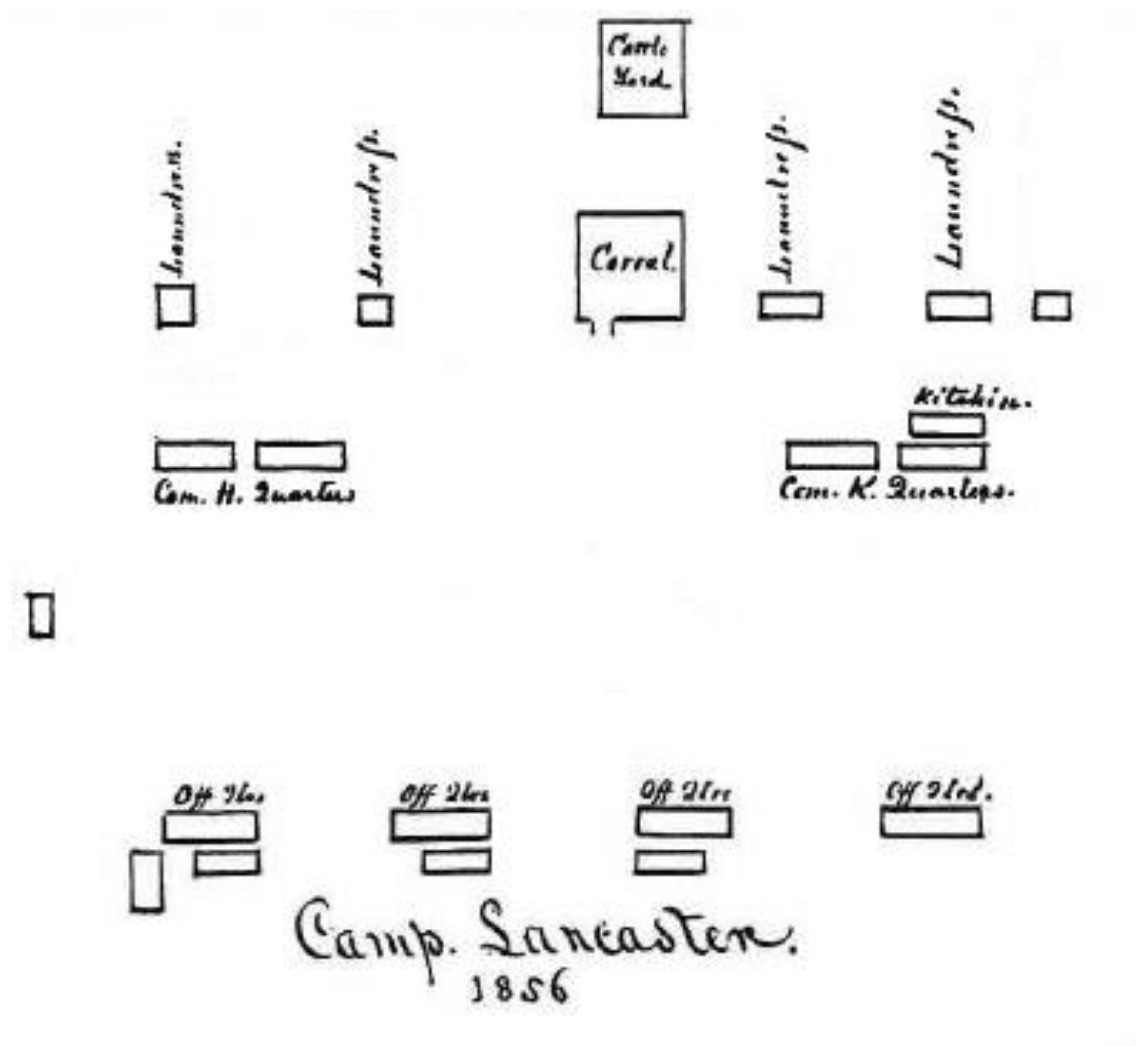
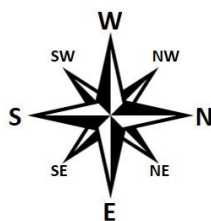
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Activity: Mapping Camp Lancaster

Listen carefully and follow the directions to complete the map of Fort Lancaster. Use the compass rose to help place buildings in the correct location on the map.

These are the labels for the buildings and landmarks:

sutler bakery carpenter blacksmith hospital flag



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Site Visit Recommendations

- Complete the pre-visit lesson or other introductory lessons prior to your field trip.
- Divide students into small groups, each with an adult chaperone.
- Make sure students bring pencils. Pens and markers are not allowed in the exhibits.

Information

To schedule a site visit field trip for your students, please call 432-836-4391.

For admission prices and hours of operation, please visit us online at <http://visitfortlancaster.com>.

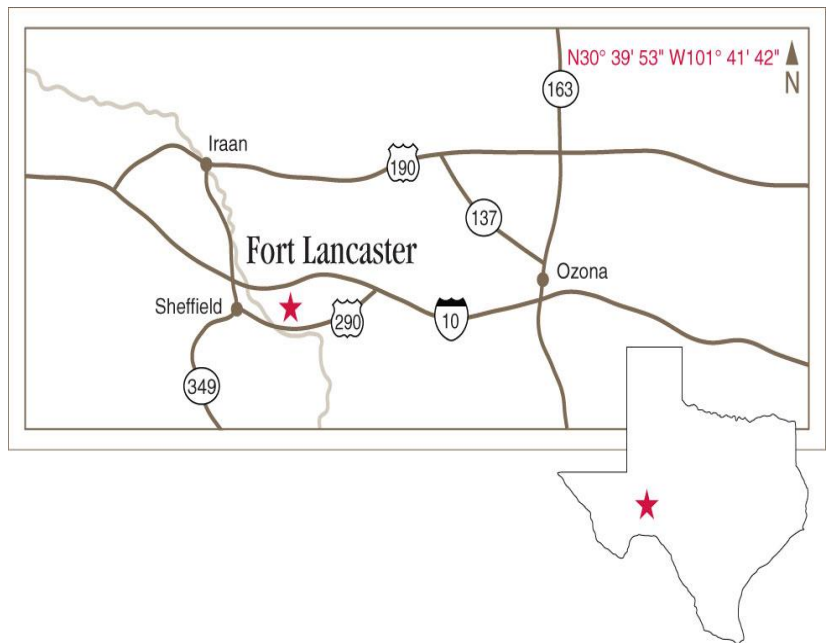
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